

analyzing both data of a preset area of the original image for both the prescanned data and the fine scanned data to calculate at least respective preset density points of density histograms of the prescanned data and the fine scanned data of said preset area as image characteristic values of the prescanned data and the fine scanned data of said preset area;

calculating a correction condition for the fine scanned data such that the image characteristic values of the prescanned data and fine scanned data match; and

processing the fine scanned data on said correction condition.

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5. (Twice Amended) The image reading method according to claim 1, wherein said image characteristic value of the preset area is, in addition to said preset density point of the density histogram of the preset area, at least one selected from the group consisting of an average density of the preset area, one or more other preset density points of the density histogram of the preset area, a highlight point of the preset area and a shadow point of the preset area.

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8. (Amended) An image reading apparatus for reading photoelectrically an original image that, when reading the image, performs prescan before performing fine scan intended to obtain output image data, and sets reading conditions for said fine scan in accordance with prescanned data obtained by the prescan, comprising:

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prescan analysis means for analyzing prescanned data of a preset area of the original image to calculate at least a preset density point of a density histogram of the prescanned data of said preset area as an image characteristic value thereof;

memory means for storing fine scanned data obtained by fine scan;

fine scan analysis means for analyzing fine scanned data of the preset area of said original image to calculate at least a preset density point of a density histogram of the fine scanned data of said preset area as an image characteristic value thereof;

correction condition setting means for setting a correction condition for the fine scanned data such that both the image characteristic values calculated by said prescan analysis means and said fine scan analysis means match; and

correction means for reading the fine scanned data from said memory means and correcting the read fine scanned data in accordance with the correction condition set by said condition setting means.

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11. (Amended) The image reading apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said image characteristic value is, in addition to said preset density point of the density histogram of the preset area, at least one selected from the group consisting of an average density of said preset area, one or more other preset density points of the density histogram of said preset area, a highlight point of the preset area and a shadow point of the preset area.

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12. (Three Times Amended) An image reading method comprising:

performing a first scan of an image and generating first image data;

performing a second scan of the image and generating second image data;

generating a correction condition by processing the first image data and the second image data; and

applying the correction condition to the second image data,

wherein the first scan is performed at a first resolution and the second scan is performed at a second resolution, and

wherein the step of generating the correction condition includes

analyzing the first image data and generating at least respective preset density points of a density histogram of the first image data as a first image characteristic value;

analyzing the second image data and generating at least respective preset density points of a density histogram of the second image data as a second image characteristic value;

comparing the first image characteristic value and the second image characteristic value; and

generating the correction condition such that the first image characteristic value matches the second image characteristic value.

17. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for reading an image comprising:

a scanner adapted to perform a first scan of an image and a second scan of an image;

a data processor adapted to generate image data from the image which has been scanned by the scanner;

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a correction condition setting subsection adapted to compare image data from the first scan and the second scan and develop a correction condition such that the first scan data and the second scan data match, the correction condition setting subsection comparing at least respective preset density points of density histograms of the first scan data and the second scan data; and

a fine scanned data correction section which uses the correction condition to correct the image data from the second scan,

wherein the first scan is performed at a first resolution and the second scan is performed at a second resolution.

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18. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

a first scan data memory adapted to store the image data from the first scan;

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a second scan data memory adapted to store the image data from the second scan;

a first scan analysis section adapted to generate a first image characteristic value from the image data from the first scan, said first image characteristic value corresponding to said preset density points of the density histogram of the first scan data;

a second scan analysis section adapted to generate a second image characteristic value from the image data from the second scan, said second image

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characteristic value corresponding to said preset density points of the density histogram of the second scan data,

wherein the image data used by the correction condition setting condition subsection to generate the correction condition includes the first image characteristic value and the second image characteristic value.

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